



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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October 21, 2004

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 300-5-3

SUBJECT: LTP – ASSEMBLY AND FILING OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP) CONTRACTS

Purpose. To provide offices with instruction on the assembly, filing, and disposition of EQIP contracts following transfer of full administrative responsibility to NRCS.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2005.

Effective October 1, 2004, NRCS assumed full administrative responsibility for EQIP. The MN Farm Service Agency (FSA) issued instructions to its offices for the transfer of all EQIP file documents to NRCS field offices.

NRCS Designated Conservationists will receive, review, and consolidate EQIP contract records received from FSA. The following actions will be completed for each EQIP contract:

- Establish a six-part folder for each EQIP contract in ProTracts. Labeling for the contract is shown in the attached guide for assembly of EQIP contracts.
- Review the current case file records and records received from FSA. Retain the original copy of all forms, records, notes, correspondence, and any photocopy with extraneous notes that may be necessary for long-term contract administration. Surplus copies of information deemed to be an exact duplicate of information in the file will be shredded. DO NOT discard without shredding any document containing sensitive or personnel information.
- Filing active contracts and completed contracts with a remaining balance of funds. Place all active contracts in a common file cabinet(s). Contracts may be filed by name of participant or consecutively by contract number at the discretion of the designated conservationist. One consistent system will be used in the office.
- Filing of terminated, cancelled, or completed contracts. NRCS has not yet issued disposition guidance for these files. Until such guidance is provided and since the field office now holds the agency record, NRCS designated conservationists will take every action to ensure these records are properly maintained and retrievable. The following interim guidance is provided consistent with existing policy for other programs.
- Record the contract status and final date in pen/ink on the upper right folder label. Place these contracts in a common location behind the active contracts or in a separate cabinet. These records will be retained for a period of time yet to be determined. Once the record retention years are known, the date on the folder will eliminate having to open each file to determine when it can be disposed.
- Conservation assistance information included in the contract folder such as conservation assistance notes, conservation plan map, soil map, and conservation plan may be moved from the contractual record to the conservation plan case file prior to archiving, if desired.

These actions should be completed concurrently with the contract reconciliation action to be completed no later than December 1, 2004.

/s/ Tim Koehler acting for
WILLIAM HUNT
State Conservationist

Attachment

DIST: ASTC(FO)
MN EQUIP
ARC
DC

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Guide for Assembly of Contracts

EQIP contracts will be assembled, with the original signature documents (with the exception of the CCC-1245), in six-part folders from top to bottom as follows (Reference: GM120, Part 404):

(1) First Cover:

- (i) Conservation Program Application/Contract (original signature copies of CCC-1200 signed by participant(s) and CCC Representative), EQIP Appendix to Form CCC-1200, Non-compliance (NRCS-LTP-153), Violation (NRCS-LTP-151), Transfer (NRCS-LTP-152), Termination, etc.
- (ii) Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification (CCC-526), Limited Resource Determination Information (copy of on-line tool worksheet, if applicable)
- (iii) Application Evaluation Worksheet (CCC-1201), Applicable Ranking Worksheet

(2) Second Cover:

- (i) Status Review (NRCS-LTP-13, latest on top)
- (ii) Manual NRCS-CPA-6 or suitable electronic documentation
- (iii) General correspondence, including Application Status Letter (date order, most recent on top)

(3) Third Cover:

- (i) Conservation plan map and legend
- (ii) Soil map
- (iii) Soil interpretive information

(4) Fourth Cover:

- (i) Conservation Plan/Contract Support Document (AD-1155 or earlier versions if before FY 2003)
- (ii) Revision or modification (AD-1156) of the Conservation Plan/Contract Support Document (latest action on top),
- (iii) Cross references to other programs that may be contributing to the implementation of the plan

(5) Fifth Cover:

- (i) Job sheets and worksheets (referenced from Conservation Plan)
- (ii) Conservation practice designs for practices scheduled, but not completed

(6) Sixth Cover:

- (i) Practice Approval and Payment Application (original signature copy of CCC-1245, original to FSA; latest on top), Producer Disbursement Transaction Statement (from FSA), for practices paid by actual cost not to exceed average (AA) or actual cost not to exceed a specified maximum include practice receipts and the Actual Cost of Installing Practices (OK-LTP-11) Note: Attach final practice certification document to the back of the CCC-1245 for which the payment is executed before filing in this section.
- (ii) Joint agreement, if any.
- (iii) Checkout notes and other supporting documentation. Note: Attach final practice certification document to the back of the CCC-1245 for which the payment is executed before filing in this section.

(iv) Assignment of Payment form CCC-36. Retain this from on top of this section until the final assigned payment is processed

Sample labeling of six part file folder:

Expiration Date Contract Status Active Completed Terminated	EQUIP 74-7335-4-A510 Josephine A. Producer Custer Co.	Contracts 120-11-11-13-5
This label can be handwritten in pencil. Use to record the current expiration date and the status of the contract.	Complete as shown in example. Use the NRCS assigned ProTracts contract number, <u>not</u> the FSA assigned number.	This label is exactly as it should appear. The number assigned correlates to the NRCS records guide for contracts.